United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

• Detailed and durable plan to resolve Haitian crisis to be presented to President Aristide and Haitian Armed Forces next week, Special Envoy Dante Caputo tells correspondents at Headquarters.

• Angolan Government and UNITA to begin United Nations-sponsored peace talks in Côte d'Ivoire on 12 April; Secretary-General's Special Representative appeals for truce and more international aid for immense human tragedy.

• Secretary-General appoints Gustave Feissel as his Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus, effective immediately; Mr. Feissel to go to Cyprus next week for meetings with leaders of two communities.

• Tens of thousands of newly displaced people are fleeing fierce fighting in western Azerbaijan and seeking sanctuary in northern part of that country, according to UNHCR.

• Under-Secretary-General for Peace-keeping Operations suggest that Member States might include peace-keeping funds in their defence budgets as a means of improving ability to pay assessed contributions.

• Budget Advisory Committee recommends $300 million financing for first two months of UNOSOM II; discusses establishment of United Nations interim offices in seven former Soviet States.

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A detailed and durable plan to resolve the crisis in Haiti will be presented to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the Haitian Armed Forces next week, Dante Caputo, Special Envoy of the United Nations and of the Organization of American States (OAS), told correspondents today.

The plan's aims are the restoration of democracy in Haiti and the return of President Aristide, overthrown by a military coup in September 1991, Mr. Caputo said at a press conference at Headquarters today. A chronology would have to be established and guarantees for the safety of the majority of

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Haitians provided. "Haiti is a country where you can feel fear everywhere, so guarantees are essential", he said.

The plan should provide for economic development, as Haiti was threatened by instability, structural poverty and inflation, Mr. Caputo argued. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Inter-American Development Bank were meeting in Washington D.C. today and tomorrow in order to put resources "under the same umbrella," he stressed.

Tentative agreements had already been reached on some parts of the plan, but agreement would be needed on every point, Mr. Caputo stated. He went on to say that action by the General Assembly was anticipated next week, after which an additional 100 United Nations human rights observers would be deployed in Haiti. More than 100 observers, mainly from the Organization of American States (OAS), are already in the country.

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The Government of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) will begin peace talks under the auspices and chairmanship of the United Nations in Côte d'Ivoire on 12 April, according to a statement issued at Headquarters.

The talks will aim to restore the cease-fire and return to the full implementation of the Peace Accords signed in Bicesse in May 1991. The two parties agreed to meet after holding consultations with Margaret J. Anstee, the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Angola.

Meanwhile, four thousand refugees fleeing the Angolan city of Huambo have been evacuated by helicopter from Caimbambo to Benguela and Lobito in a five-day operation organized by the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The helicopters used in the operation, which ended 4 April, flew food, blankets and medicines into Caimbambo.

Miss Anstee said the refugees were an infinitesimal part of the immense human tragedy resulting from the hostilities in Angola. She appealed for a truce or a cease-fire and for more aid from the international community to meet escalating needs in the coming months. Even if hostilities were to cease, the suffering might increase because of the disruption of food production and distribution, the destruction of infrastructure, and the huge number of displaced people, she said.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has appointed Gustave Feissel as his Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus effective immediately. The appointment is at the Assistant Secretary-General level.

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According to a statement issued at Headquarters today, Mr. Feissel, who will be the Secretary-General's resident Representative, will go to Cyprus next week to meet with the leaders of the two communities over the coming weeks. Those meetings will be held in preparation for the joint negotiations that are scheduled to resume in New York on 24 May.

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Tens of thousands of newly displaced people are fleeing the fierce fighting in western Azerbaijan and have sought sanctuary in the north of the country, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The UNHCR and other relief organizations have dispatched emergency teams to deliver urgently needed assistance to the refugees in that area.

In a press release issued at Headquarters today, the agency said an estimated 27,000 civilians were still trapped in more than 30 villages in the Kelbajar region west of the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh, where a new military offensive was launched late last week. Many more, the agency said, were in imminent danger of being cut off from the rest of Azerbaijan.

The UNHCR sent two five-member teams to Armenia and Azerbaijan in early December to set up offices in both Republics. The offices, in Yerevan and Baku, represent the first emergency assistance to refugees and displaced people provided by the UNHCR in the former Soviet Union.

Armenia has absorbed at least 330,000 refugees since 1988, or about 10 per cent of its entire population. Azerbaijan is host to about 460,000 refugees and displaced.

Meanwhile, the Security Council was holding consultations on the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh this afternoon.

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Although the United Nations lacked the resources to cope with expanding crisis spots around the globe, it could not shirk its responsibilities when called upon to render assistance, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs Marrack Goulding said yesterday.

Opening the organizational session of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping Operations, he noted that increased demands on the United Nations to assume peace-keeping responsibilities had worsened the financial crisis facing the Organization. He suggested that Member States might include peace-keeping funds in their defence budgets instead of their foreign ministries' budgets as a means of improving their ability to pay assessed contributions.

Following his re-election as Chairman, Ibrahim A. Gambari of Nigeria said the Special Committee was meeting at a time when peace-keeping operations had not only dramatically increased in number, but had assumed new dimensions in the light of various regional disputes which had arisen. With that

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development, he noted, the role of the Committee had logically become vital in addressing the problems which confronted peace-keeping.

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The General Assembly should appropriate $300 million to finance the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) for its first two months, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) has told the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary). Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali had proposed that $327.2 million be appropriated for the two months.

UNOSOM II will begin to take over from the United States-led Unified Task Force on 1 May and will increase the number of United Nations troops in Somalia from 715 to 28,000.

Meanwhile, ACABQ has also begun discussing the establishment of United Nations interim offices in seven former Soviet States.

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